

OFFICER REPORT FOR COMMITTEE

DATE: 13/12/2019

P/19/1096/TO

MR IAN COLLINS

FELL ONE MONTEREY PINE PROTECTED BY TPO 545

4 CROFTON LANE, HILL HEAD, PO14 3LR.

Report By

Nate Smith – 01329 824415

1.0 *Introduction*

- 1.1 The application is reported to the Planning Committee due to the number of third-party letters received in support of the proposal.

2.0 *Site Description*

- 2.1 This application relates to a property within the urban area on the east side of Crofton Lane, south of Seafield Park Road and west of Monks Way.
- 2.2 The application tree is a mature Monterey pine situated on the north side of the rear garden of 4 Crofton Lane, approximately half way between the dwelling to the west and the rear boundary with Monks Way to the east.
- 2.3 The pine is a large, prominent specimen, which is visible from several public vantage points including Salterns Road, Crofton Lane, Seafield Park Road and Monks Way.
- 2.4 The pine was inspected from ground level during a site visit on 15th May 2019 and was observed to be in good condition, exhibiting normal growth characteristics for the species in terms of needle size, density and colour. No defects or abnormalities were identified that would give rise to concerns about the health and safety of the tree.
- 2.5 The tree is situated approximately 16 metres from the nearest dwellings to the north in Seafield Park Road and 28 metres from the house at 4 Crofton Lane. The garden land to the rear of the application property is approximately 68 metres long and 14 metres wide adjacent to the Monterey pine.
- 2.6 The application tree is estimated to be 20 metres in height with a crown spread of 14 metres in diameter.

3.0 Description of Proposal

- 3.1 The Monterey pine tree subject to the application is protected by a TPO (No.545) which was confirmed in February 2005. Consent is sought to fell the Monterey pine. The applicant's reasons for this are because it is completely outgrowing its location due to its large size, loss of amenity to applicant and neighbours due to excessive shading; and potential damage if it fell in high winds.

4.0 Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 None

5.0 Representations

- 5.1 Ten representations have been received supporting the proposal on the following grounds:

- The tree is too large for its location
- The tree blights the use of the garden and that of neighbours
- The needles block gutters and ruins gardens
- The tree poses a health and safety risk to homes
- The tree blocks light to gardens
- The branches look unsafe and overhang neighbour's property

6.0 Amenity Value

- 6.1 The tree is a mature specimen of good form with a high degree of visibility. It is visible from a number of public locations within the vicinity of the site. Officers consider the tree to be of high amenity value contributing significantly to the appearance of the area.

7.0 Tree safety

- 7.1 Trees are living organisms and their condition and vitality can alter quickly depending on environmental and physical factors. It is acknowledged that trees have a natural failure rate as a natural evolutionary process leading to the optimisation of structural strength verses efficient use of resources. Some species have adapted more effectively than others, and some are naturally more prone to failure than others. Therefore no tree can be considered completely safe.
- 7.2 The amount of noise and movement associated with trees during high winds can be unnerving. However, the perceived threat of failure should not be a basis for tree pruning or indeed removal. All trees pose some degree of risk, but in this case there is nothing to suggest that the Monterey pine poses an undue level of risk. There are no guarantees of absolute safety in the event of severe adverse weather conditions, since all assessments should be undertaken for normal conditions and not try to speculate about what might happen in the event of severe or abnormal weather events.

- 7.3 The tree has been inspected by the Council's arborists from ground level. Officers could not see any obvious signs of disease or outward signs that the tree is failing. The tree appeared healthy and of good form. No evidence has been provided by the applicant which suggests that the tree is in any way failing or diseased. There is no evidence therefore that indicates that this pine poses a hazard sufficient to outweigh its public amenity value and thereby justify its removal.

8.0 *Tree related debris, dominance and shading*

- 8.1 It is generally to be expected that a large, mature tree will produce amounts of tree related debris. The periodic clearing of debris, albeit an inconvenience, is considered to be part of routine household maintenance when living in close proximity to trees and provides no justification for removing this good quality tree.
- 8.2 The Monterey pine is a large mature open grown tree, which will cast shade throughout the day, however the shade pattern will change throughout the day to affect different parts of 4 Crofton Lane and neighbouring properties at different times.
- 8.3 During the months between March and September the longest shadows will be cast to the west in the morning, moving clockwise throughout the day to cast the shortest shadow to the north around the middle of the day and then to the east as shadows lengthen again towards evening period.
- 8.4 Dominance and shading from trees can be subjective, but in this instance this large tree is situated within a low-density residential layout with substantial garden spaces that are not dominated by shade cast from the pine for any significant period.
- 8.5 Notwithstanding this, the Council's arborists have indicated to the applicant they would be able to support some lifting of the crown and reduction in the length of some branches overhanging the applicant's, along with neighbouring gardens.

Conclusion

- 8.5 The tree is of high amenity value. The tree is of good form and does not show any obvious signs of disease or failure. The applicant has not submitted any information to contradict this view.
- 8.6 Tree preservation orders seek to protect trees in the interest of public amenity; therefore it follows the removal of a protected tree should only be sanctioned where its public amenity value is outweighed by other considerations.

- 8.7 Having carefully considered all relevant matters, Officers do not consider there are any matters which outweigh the amenity value of this tree and accordingly recommend that the application is refused.

9.0 Recommendation

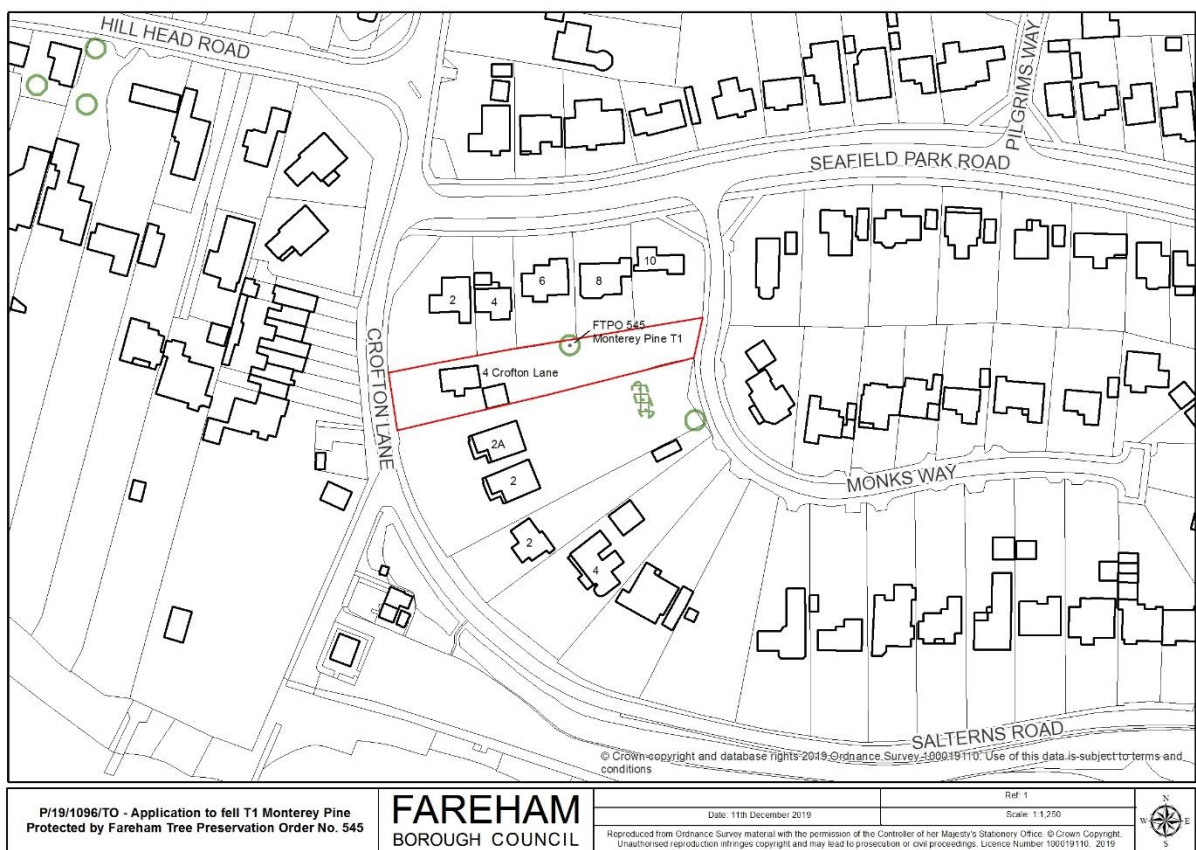
- 9.1 REFUSE:

- 9.2 The felling of the Monterey pine would be harmful to the amenity and character of the area. No overriding arboricultural grounds have been provided to justify the removal of this healthy mature tree.

10.0 Background Papers

P/19/1096/TO and TPO 545

4 Crofton Lane - location plan



4 Crofton Lane – Aerial and public vantage points photo



4 Crofton Lane – householder comments

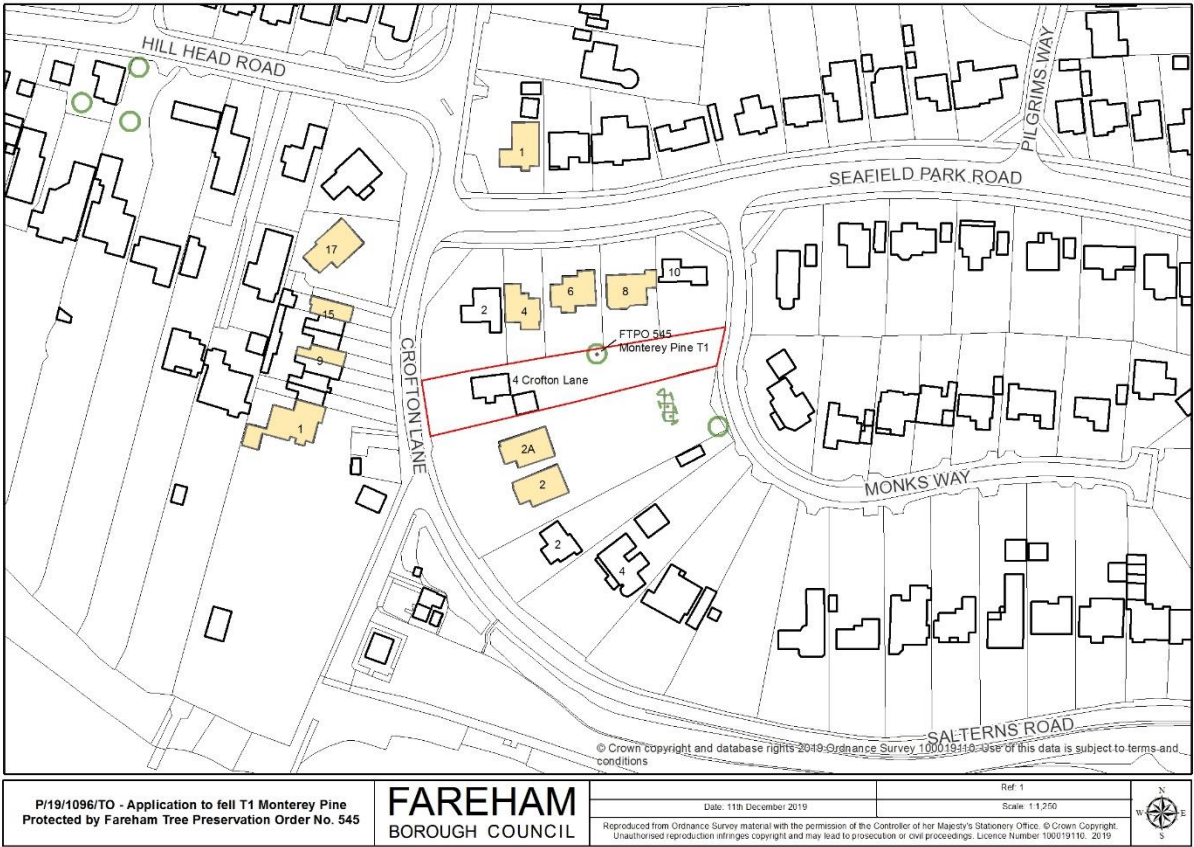


Photo 01 – view from Monks Way



Photo 02 – view from Monks Way



Photo 03 – view from Seafield Park Road



Photo 04 – view from Seafield Park Road



Photo 05 – view from Seafield Park Road



Photo 06 – view from Crofton Lane

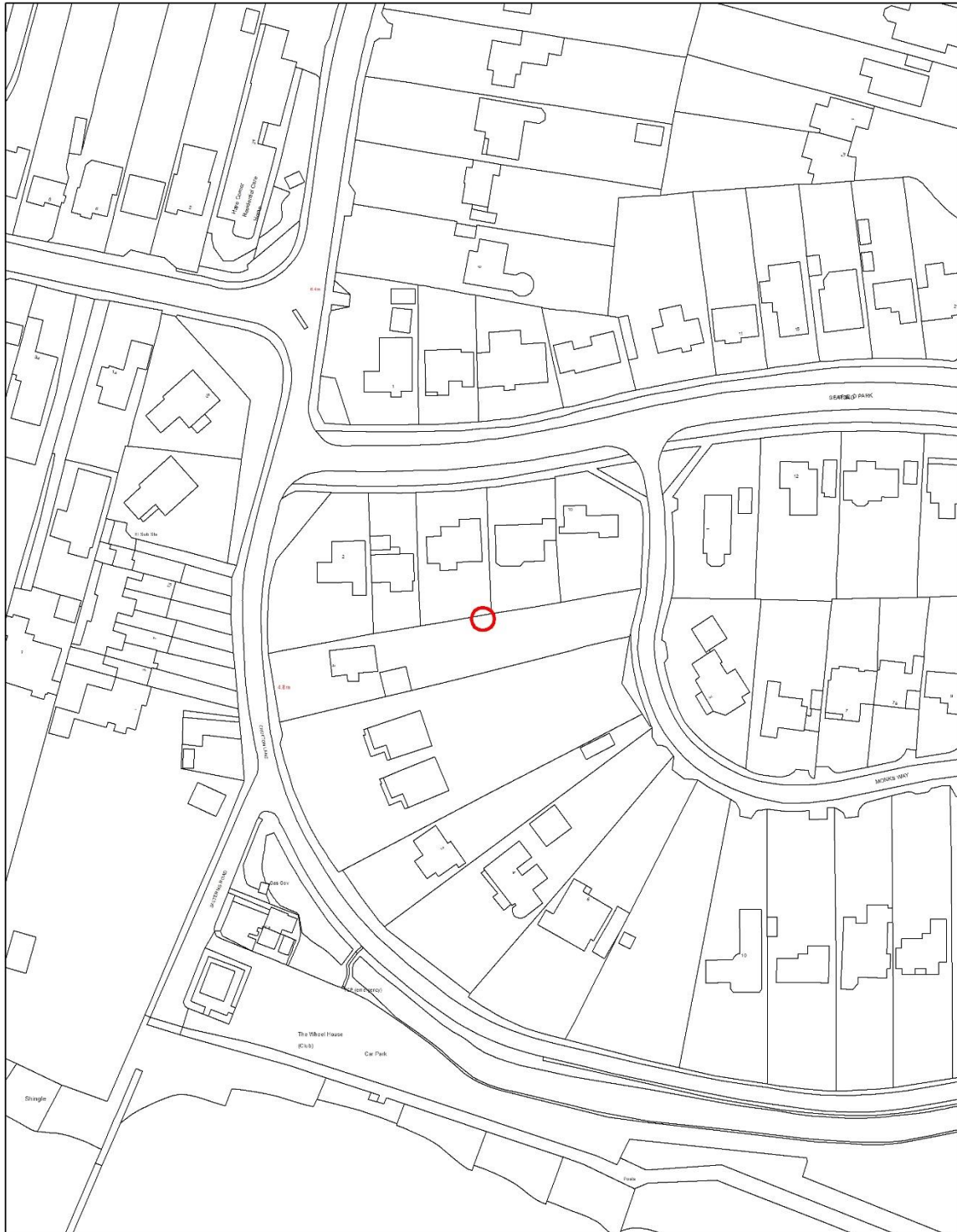


Photo 07 – view from Salterns Road



FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL



4 Crofton Lane
Scale: 1:2,500



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